

Al Rajhi Bank

Ex. 94



Salman al-Ouda

Additional Name(s): Salman al-Awda, Salman Alodah, Salman Fahad Al Odah, سلمان فهد العوده

Gender: Male

Current Location: Ha'ir Prison, South of Riyadh

Perpetrator: Saudi Arabia

Ethnic Group: Arab

Religion or Belief: Muslim – Sunni

Reports of Torture: Yes

Reports of Medical Neglect: No

Date of Detainment: September//2017

Current Status: Not Released

Religious Leader: Yes

Most Recent Type of Abuse: Detainment

Reason for Persecution: Criticizing Religious Freedom Conditions Religious Belief Religious Figure & Religious Leadership Role

Nature of Charges: Banned Organization Incitement to Commit Crime & Violence Terrorism Treason & Sedition

Salman al-Ouda

Extra Bio Info:

Sheikh Salman al-Ouda is detained for supporting greater religious coexistence and criticizing the government.

In September 2017, police arrested al-Ouda, an Islamic scholar, from his home amid a state-wide wave of arrests of scholars, intellectuals, and activists. According to Amnesty International, al-Ouda was held incommunicado and in solitary confinement for the first five months of his detention, with no access to a lawyer or his family. He was also held in pre-trial detention without being charged for a year.

In January 2018, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights demanded al-Ouda's release, citing him as "an influential religious figure who has urged greater respect for human rights within [Islamic Law]."

In September 2018, al-Ouda appeared before the Specialized Criminal Court in Riyadh for his first hearing. There, it was revealed that prosecutors had charged him with 37 crimes, including "affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood" and "corrupting the country by repeatedly endeavouring to shake the structure of the nation and bring about civil strife; inflaming society against the rulers and stirring up unrest," and were seeking the death penalty against him. According to Democracy for the Arab World Now, prosecutors presented hundreds of tweets in which al-Ouda "criticized government projects, called for reforms, and demanded the release of prisoners."

Since that first hearing, al-Ouda's trial has been postponed multiple times and/or held in closed door sessions.

Sources:

- Photo used with permission from [MENA Rights Group](#)
- [USCIRF Annual Report 2024: Saudi Arabia](#)
- [USCIRF Annual Report 2023: Saudi Arabia](#)
- [USCIRF Country Update: Religious Freedom Conditions in Saudi Arabia](#) December 2022
- [USCIRF Factsheet: Saudi Arabia's Specialized Criminal Court](#) December 2021
- [USCIRF Spotlight Podcast: Saudi Arabia's Religious Reforms Not Enough](#) October 2021
- [USCIRF Country Update: Religious Freedom Conditions in Saudi Arabia](#) September 2021
- Amnesty International, [Tweet](#), March 15, 2021
- USCIRF, [Tweet](#), October 16, 2020
- ["Expressing Cynicism about the Government's Achievements': KSA Imprisons Salman Alodah, a Popular Scholar Advocating for Reform"](#) Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)
- ["Saudi Islamic scholar Salman Al Odah at risk of execution"](#) MENA Rights Group
- ["Saudi cleric Salman al-Awda who called for reform could be sentenced to death"](#) NBC News
- ["Saudi Arabia: Prominent reformist cleric faces death sentence for his peaceful activism"](#) Amnesty International
- ["Saudi Arabia: Prominent Cleric May Face Death Penalty"](#) Human Rights Watch
- ["UN experts decry Saudi Arabia's persistent use of anti-terror laws to persecute peaceful activists"](#) UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

